

AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES

September 13, 2011

Bangs Community Center: Glass Room

Members Present: Daniel Clapp, Sue Dierks, Joan Golowich, Joel Gordon, Rosemary Kofler, Mary Jane Laus, Barbara Sutherland, Juana Trujillo, Jack Wollensak

Select Board Liaison: Stephanie O'Keeffe

Staff Present: Nancy Pagano (Director/Program Director), Maura Plante (Assistant Director/Services), Karen Erman (Administrative Assistant), Evelyn Ross (Lunch Site Director and Outreach Assistant)

Guests: Doris Holden (Treasurer of the Friends of the Amherst Senior Center), Julie Federman (Director, Amherst Public Health) Barbara Slovin (President of the Friends), John Lutz (Executive Director of HVES), Scott Merzbach (Gazette Reporter).

Welcome: Dan Clapp, Chair, called the Council on Aging meeting to order at 9:06 AM.

The COA members signed a card for Town Manager, John Musante, who recently had an accident and Dan Clapp made a motion: **Expressing our joy that the injuries do not seem permanent, that he is recovering well now at home, and best wishes for a full and soon recovery.** The motion passed unanimously. The COA members appreciate John's great interest and responsiveness to our concerns for the welfare of our seniors.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the August 4, 2011 meeting were approved and accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

2011 Flu Vaccine Issues:

Julie Federman reported. Due to state budget cuts the supply of flu vaccine has been dramatically cut. The state supply of flu vaccine will only be available to elders who are uninsured or underinsured. Therefore, the Amherst Health Department has decided to partner with CVS and CVS will provide the vaccine for **all** seniors who have Medicare at the annual flu clinic. The pneumonia vaccine will be available to **uninsured** seniors. Tetanus vaccine will be available to **all** seniors. The Flu Clinic will be held on October 15 from 9 AM – 12 PM at the Bangs Community Center.

FRIENDS

Treasurer's Report:

Doris provided a handout showing \$7,800.52 in the checking account and \$77,115.04 in the investment account, plus a \$15,000 CD that will mature December 4, 2011 with interest of 0.75%. The Treasurer's report was approved and accepted.

Donations for FY11 to date:

Karen reported. Thus far for FY12 (that began on July 1, 2011) the Friends, has received \$388.00. Since the solicitation letter went out in the November 2010 newsletter, \$14,074.77 has been donated.

2012 Follies Update:

Barbara Slovin reported. Donna Lee and the Friends decided on several changes for the Follies. It will be held earlier in the year (in March) and we are hoping to use Buckley Hall at Amherst College as the venue.

The Friends is exploring new ideas for fundraising. They are currently looking into the possibility of a "Murder Mystery Dinner" at a local restaurant.

The Friends Board has added two new members – Dick Kofler and Arnold Friedman.

The first and upcoming fundraiser for FY12 will be held on October 4 at Bertucci's restaurant. From 5:30 – 9:00 that night, 15% of all sales will be donated to the Senior Center.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Lunch Site Update:

Evie Ross thanked John Lutz, director of HVES, for his attendance today. HVES makes all the food for the congregate and delivered meals. It is delivered to the Amherst Senior Center, which then delivers meals to about 40-50 elders and feeds 18-30 elders at the congregate dining each day. The numbers have gone down this year by 6.7%. The drivers are vital to the delivery program. They see and talk to the senior every day and gain information about the status and needs of the elder. There are several reasons for the decrease in numbers: sometimes meals are suspended due to hospitalization or rehabilitation, change of residence, death, more limited dietary restrictions, or a reassessment of a client's care package by Highland Valley's care advisors. Snow days accounted for 245 meals not delivered. The law states that a senior in need cannot go longer than three days without a meal delivery.

John Lutz emphasized that no elder is cut from the meals program for fiscal reasons. "It is not an income eligibility based program. It is a capability and assessment based program." HVES is trying to be more disciplined about assessing an elder's capability and needs. They assess the elders every 90 days rather than every 6 months. That is the main reason for a 10-15% reduction in the program.

The federal money that comes for the meals program does not support the total cost of the meals. Home care money comes from the state. There is currently no wait list for the home care program.

Parking Sticker Program:

Jack reported. After six and one half weeks, 83 parking decals have been sold. Jack keeps three computer records and two hard copy records of each sale in addition to a copy of the receipt. The main problem is that a number of Senior Center volunteers and Meals on Wheels drivers do not qualify for the decal because they do not live in Amherst or because they are younger than 65. Jack has a list of those people with the hope that we can find some way to include them in the program, otherwise we may risk losing some of these volunteers. Temporarily Nancy has been supplying quarters to help those volunteers pay for parking now that the paper placard is no longer allowed. It was suggested that the Parking Sub-committee (Jack and Joel) compose a letter to the Parking Commission and the Select Board expressing our concerns and asking that an exception be made in the qualifications for purchasing a decal in order to accommodate those few volunteers (10-15 in number) who do not currently qualify.

Long Range Planning:

Jack reported. A copy of the New Senior Center Power Point presentation from the August COA meeting was sent to the Town Manager so that he could present it to the Select Board.

As per request of the Town Manager, a prioritized list of rooms most often used at Bangs and their activities was prepared. Also prepared was a list of activities which we do not offer due to lack of space

The area of Bangs that is used by the Senior Center, including common space such as rest rooms, the boiler room, corridors, etc., was calculated to be 13,500 sq.ft. The original blueprints were used for the calculation.

At the meeting of the sub-committee this week, we decided to continue to pursue a new stand-alone senior center and the expansion of the Bangs space. We contacted the Planning Director who told us that the best place for expansion of Bangs would be at the South end of the building because the Town already owns that land.

The sub-committee plans to invite Patte Shaughnessy, Director of the Northampton Senior Center, to a meeting to talk about the planning, site location, design and financing of the Northampton SC. They will also invite Steve Kravetz of the Center for Extended Care and Ms. Shaughnessy to discuss senior day care centers.

Jack, Sue and Barbara plan to attend a seminar entitled "Everything You Should Know about Senior Center Design" at the Mass COA Annual Conference in Sturbridge on October 5.

STAFF REPORTS

Nancy:

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs Annual Report for FY11 was submitted. There are some changes from the previous report that stand out. There are about 2000 more hours of volunteer time. There are more volunteers. The In-kind income this year totaled about \$640,000 compared to \$360,000 last year. *MySeniorCenter* statistics allowed us to determine the actual number of seniors that we served, which was 2434 different elders. According to the 2010 census there are 4168 elders in Town.

Nancy stressed the importance of members 'swiping' their *MySeniorCenter* card **each time** they attend a meeting or volunteer.

Maura:

Because of the increase in the Formula Grant from EOEA, Maura has been able to use some of the extra money to increase Evie's hours. Evie helps Maura with home visits, assisting people with applications for benefits, and assessing elder's needs.

The Emergency Fund has about \$2000 remaining.

Maura and Nancy will be meeting with Caroline Dreyspool, a senior at Amherst College, to talk about the "Ageless Organization" that was started by Bessie Young.

Maura and Evie will be attending the Amherst College "Center for Community Engagement" Fair on September 14.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

Highland Valley Elder Services:

Joan reported. One of the presentations at the September 12 meeting was on the "Home Care" program – funding and eligibility.

Title III grants will be announced and applicants will be notified later this week.

The COA meeting adjourned at 10:27 AM.

The next meeting of the COA will be held on October 20, 2011 at 9:00 AM at the Bangs Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Kofler, Secretary

The approved minutes of the August, 2011 meeting were delivered to the Select Board Office to be filed.

**Council on Aging
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Document List

The following documents were made available to all members of the COA during the meeting. They are available for review at the Amherst Senior Center, 70 Boltwood Walk, Amherst MA.

1. Meeting Agenda.
2. Minutes of August 4, 2011 meeting.
3. Friends of the Amherst Senior Center Treasurer's Report.
4. Annual Flu Clinic information
5. Amherst Council on Aging FY11 Annual Report
6. Amherst Senior Center/COA FY11 Annual Report
7. Executive Office of Elder Affairs FY11 Annual Report